

N^o 6.

Winter Meditations :

O R, A

S E R M O N

CONCERNING

Frost, and Snow, and Winds, &c.

A N D

The Wonders of God therein.

The Second Edition.

By *John Shower.*

L O N D O N,

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PSALM CXLVII. 15, 16, 17, 18.

*sendeth forth his Commandment on Earth,
his Word runneth very swiftly. He giveth
Snow like Wool: He scattereth the Hoar
Frost like Ashes. He casteth forth his Ice like
Morsels: Who can stand before his Cold?
He sendeth out his Word, and melteth them:
He causeth his Wind to blow, and the Waters
flow.*

THE Egyptians, who were famous for their Knowledg, and communicated the Sciences to many Parts of the World, were most ignorant and sottish in their thoughts of GOD, and as brutish in their Worship of him. They fancy'd a multitude of particular Gods, as included and shut up within the Bosoms of Sheep and Oxen, Goats and Dogs, &c. and any other more inferior Creatures, whom therefore they worship'd, to the number of Thirty thousand Gods.

The Romans (more polish'd and renown'd for civil Prudence) were comparatively wiser in their religious Worship: and for a long time after the institutions of *Numa Pompilius*, they refus'd to admit any Images of the Divinity in their Commonwealth; as believing that GOD was every where visible, by some Impressions of Divinity in every creature, in every Action, in every Event. But for want of the darkness of a carnal Mind, and want of Scripture-Revelation, they became lost in their Imaginations, and ran into numberless superstitions unworthy of GOD. That Truth however, of which they had but obscure and im-

perfect Notices, we may usefully consider, by Reason enlighten'd from the Holy Scriptures, That GOD hath visibly discover'd himself in the Works of Nature, and common Providence; that in these there are some Lineaments and Footsteps of his *Eternal Power and Godhead*; that some Symbols of him may be observ'd, and read in the Book of the Creatures.

And as every thing is beautiful in its Season, this part of his Works, which the Psalmist here mentions, is proper for our Contemplation at this time of the Year. The extreme Cold of the Season may assist to warm our Devotion and Reverence towards GOD; while we seriously consider the Works of his Hand, these Wonders of his Goodness, Wisdom, and Power, in giving *Snow like Wool* and *commanding Frost and Ice*, and by a Word *discovering it*, &c.

The Title and Conclusion of this Psalm, *Hallelujah* (with which this and some that follow do both begin and end) is a Call and Exhortation to celebrate the high Praises of GOD. I shall not enquire into the time of penning of this Psalm, or of the Authors of it: The whole is an Invitation to praise God; and two sorts of Arguments are employ'd to press it: Such as are taken from his general Goodness and Bounty to all the World, and such as relate to his special Favour and Kindness to his People. So were the *Jews* in a peculiar manner under the Names of *Sion* and *Jerusalem*. Their Temporal Blessings and their Privileges, as to Religious are both mention'd. As to the former sort, we have the four principal Parts of a People's Prosperity, viz. Strength of Places, multitude of Inhabitants, Civil Peace, and plentiful Provision. *Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem! Praise thy God, O Sion! who hath strengthen'd the Bars of thy Gates, and blessed thy Children within thee, and made thee*

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*in thy Borders ; and filleth thee with the fat, or
of the Wheat, ver. 12, 13, 14.*

This hath God done for us, *saith the Psalmist,*
by the same Almighty Sovereign Power, which
continually shews it self in the World, in every
Season of the Year : For *when he sends forth his
Commandment on the Earth, his Word runneth very
swiftly.* He hath done it *powerfully,* by a word of
Command : and *swiftly* too, for he but speaks
the Word, and it is done. Astonishing Power
indeed ! that after an hard Winter, whereby e-
very thing almost on the Earth seem'd to be kil-
led, he can give a plentiful Harvest, and a fruit-
ful Season. 'Tis He hath done this, *who gives
Snow like Wool,* that descends silently, and lies on
the Ground like a Fleece of Wool ; so that no
Sheep is more warmly clad with Wool than the
Earth by great Snows. At other times he gently
scatters his hoary Frost like Ashes. 'Tis He, who in
a Winter-Season, *casteth forth his Ice like Morsels,*
that a multitude of small pieces of Ice may be
seen upon the Earth, like *Morsels* of Bread, with-
out any appearance of Water, or moisture in
them. And this he sometimes accompanys with
such extremity of Cold, as none can resist the
force of it, or long support it. Neither Man,
nor Beast on Earth, nor the Fishes in the Ponds
and Rivers, are long able to endure it. *Who can
stand before his Cold ?* On the other hand, his
Power is as great in the sudden Change of the
Weather. *He sendeth out his Word, and melteth
them,* i. e. these Morsels of Ice ; *he causeth his
Wind to blow,* and the Snow and Ice is dissolv'd,
and the Waters flow again, i. e. he causerh a sud-
den Thaw by the warm Breath of softer Winds,
that the Waters come down in full Streams on the
Valleys.

By these things the Power and Providence of GOD is made known to the World ; but 'tis a peculiar Privilege of his People ; that he discovers himself to them in another and better manner. As it follows in the close of the Psalm, *Ver. 19, He hath shew'd his Word unto Jacob, his Statutes unto Israel: He hath not dealt so with every Nation ; as for his Judgments they have known them.*

Other People might receive Showers and Snow out of the Clouds, but not the Laws and Commandments of God, as the Jews did upon Mount Sinai. He hath another Method of instructing Jerusalem and Sion ; not by Frost, and Snow, and Ice only, but the Divine Word of Power and Wisdom which causeth them ; but by his Statutes and Judgments which in a glorious manner he deliver'd to 'em from Heaven. Such a Revelation of his Will, no other Nation was to be favor'd with besides the Jews until the *Messias*, promis'd to all Nations, as well as to them, should come and break down the Partition-Wall. For all which Blessings, *Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem ! Praise thy God, O Sion !*

Here I shall endeavour two things :

I. To show how these Works of GOD here mention'd do objectively praise him, or bear Testimony to his Being and Perfections.

II. That *We ought to praise* and acknowledg GOD and give Glory to him, on the account of these Works. And as the Application and Improvement of the former, I shall direct you in some Instances how to do so.

I. These Works of GOD (which the Winter Season especially calls us to contemplate, such as *Frost and Snow, and Ice and Cold*) do objectively praise him : They bear Testimony to the Existence

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A GOD, as the Author of them, and to several the Divine Perfections. He challengeth a Propriety in these things, as *his Works*. He forms all the Meteors at first, as well as gives them their commission afterward. Among all the mighty Monarchs of the Earth, there is none can condense the Waters, or congeal them; can command the Frost or Snow to be on the Earth, or to be dissolv'd. *It by his Breath the Frost is given, and the breadth of the Waters straitned. He saith to the Snow, Be thou on the Earth; likewise to the small Rain, and to the great Rain of his Strength, Job 37. 6, 10.* The Waters are dry'd up by the Command of his Word, and they flow again by his Order. Ver. 7. *He sealeth up the Hand of every Man,* by an extreme frost; *he bindeth their Hands from working* (in the fields especially, and as to several Trades) *that all men may know his Work.* At such a Season they have leisure and Opportunity to consider it more seriously, when by reason of the Frost, *the Waters are hid as with a Stone*; that is, with Ice as hard as Stone. Job 38. 30. *And the Face of the Deep is frozen:* Not only little Ponds and Rivulets, but great Rivers, and sometimes an Arm of the Sea. And then 'tis his Prerogative to make the Waters flow, and the Rivers return to their wonted Course. These and all other Creatures are *his Servants*, *Psalm 119. 91. by whom he is punctually obey'd.* *Psalm 135. 6. Whatsoever he pleaseth, that doth he, in Heaven and Earth, and Air and Sea, and all deep Places.* *Psalm 104. 3. The Clouds are his Chariot,* where he rides in the visible Demonstrations of his glorious Power, Wisdom, and Goodness. *Psalm 18. 11. The thick Clouds of the Sky are said to be his Pavilion,* as he resided there as a General, to command the Winds and Meteors, and give out their several commissions. Job 37. 11, 12. *They are all turn'd about, and dispos'd of, by his Counsel; to do whatsoever*

ever he commands them, upon the Face of the World the Earth. And by watering he wearys the thick Clouds; that is, he sends 'em to remote Places to empty themselves, till they can give down no more. In this watering he is said to weary the Clouds; speaking after the manner of Men, who are weary'd with long Journys.

How solemnly doth God challenge this to his Right, as Creator and Original of all things. Isa. 40. 12. *My Hand, saith he, hath laid the Foundations of the Earth, and my right Hand hath measured out the Heavens as a Span; and when I call (unto any or any of them) they stand up together, as Servants in a Posture of Readiness to observe my Direction and do my Pleasure.* And no wonder if they observe his Orders, when it was his Word brought 'em into Being. *He is the Father of the Rain: he begetteth the Drops of Dew:* He owns all the Figures of Snow: *He holds all the Winds in his Hand.* He needs but open his Hand, to let it blow from any Quarter he pleaseth. There is not a breath of Wind can stir, to bind up the Waters, or move 'em, but as he appoints. He is said to walk, to ride, to fly upon the Wings of the Wind, Psal. 107. 27. & 148. 8. Some of the Heathens had such a sense of the Necessity of God's government of the Winds, that they devis'd a God on purpose (*Æolus*) whom they feign'd to have the Care and Dominion of 'em. The like may be said of all other Meteors.

We may consider more particularly how the Glory of God appears in these his ordinary Works, how they show forth his Praise: 1. As to the Nature and Causes of them. 2. The wonderful Variety of them. 3. Their regular Succession in the proper Seasons. 4. Their absolute intire Subjection to the Disposal of God. Lastly, The excellent Purposes for which they serve, as the

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manag'd, and directed by his Sovereign Will and Wisdom.

1. If we look into their Nature and Original, it will soon be found they are the Works of GOD, and can have no other Parent or first Cause to produce 'em. We understand but little of the nature of Heat and Cold, Dryness and Moisture, and how skilfully they are mix'd and temper'd together; of how small Parts the Meteors in the Air consist, and how they are united; how the Vapours are collected, whereof the Clouds are form'd; and how there should be such a mighty force in a Combination of 'em; when apart consider'd, there is nothing weaker, or more inconsiderable than a Vapour, to which the Life of Man is compar'd for its frailty. We know not how the liquid Waters are chang'd into solid Ice, and hardned as a Rock, and then softned by the turn of the Wind. It is all the Work of God, Jer. 10. 12. *Who made the Earth by his Power, establish'd the World by his Wisdom, and stretched out the Heavens by his Discretion.* Job 38. *Who else is the Parent of the Rain? Out of whose Womb came the Ice? The Hoary Frost of Heaven, who hath tendered it? Hast thou enter'd into the Springs of the Sea? or walk'd in search of the Depth? Have the Gates of Heaven been open to thee? Hast thou perceiv'd the Breadth of the Earth? Declare if thou knowest it all. Where is the way where Light dwells? And as for Darkness, what is the Place thereof? Hast thou enter'd into the Treasures of Snow? Or hast thou seen the Treasures of Hail? &c.*

Who can distinctly explain the Formation and Expansion of the Clouds? How they are ballanc'd and sustain'd in the Air, how they dilate and spread themselves (much less how far they shall) what Commission they carry, where and when they shall unburden themselves? &c. This is *one of the Works of him, who is perfect in Knowledg,* Job 37. 15, 16.

17. and infinite in Power. So far are we from full understanding of these things, that we know not how our Clothes do keep us warm, when God quickeneth the Earth with a South-Wind. The like secret influence of his Benediction is necessary to it, as to make our Food to nourish us.

Moreover, what but a Divine Power can uphold the Clouds in the Air, when they are fill'd with Water? 'Tis no less a wonder, (as one expresseth it) than if you should see a Tun of Water contain'd within a Cobweb, as strongly as in a Vessel of Brass or Iron. The same Almighty Power (*Job 36. 27.*) maketh small the Drops of Water, in the Clouds, that they pour down Rain according to the Vapour thereof; That the Clouds distil in gentle Showers, and do not fall down all at once. The Original and Cause of these things is manifestly Divine: There is much in the nature of them past our Line to fathom; as being the Product of Infinite Power, and unsearchable Wisdom.

2. God is prais'd by the wonderful Variety and Diversity of these his Works, in several Countries and in our own. Thus the Air is sometimes moist, dry, and sometimes moist; sometimes calm, at other times stormy: The Weather is sometimes clear, sometimes cloudy; sometimes warm, at other times cold: In some Months we have more Rain, in others more Sun-shine: The Winds blow sometimes from this Quarter, and sometimes from a different or contrary one; now more gently, at another time with more Violence. 'Tis the Work of GOD and an instance of his Wisdom and Goodness, that as in some parts of the Year the Air is stuff'd with Clouds, and the Heavens darken'd by the low descent of thick Vapours; in others, the Sky is serene and clear, like a Moulten Looking-glass. At one time the Earth is cleft and broken into Pieces by the Heat of Summer; and then we find it covered

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ver'd with Snow, or harden'd like Ice, by the Cold of Winter. This Variety is not *casual*, but a *Divine Appointment*; especially if we consider,

3. *The Regular Succession of these Works of God in their proper Seasons*: That after the Darkeness of every Night, there is a Resurrection of Light every Morning; and that Winter and Summer, Spring and Autumn, Seed-time and Harvest do not cease, but duly observe their Turns. O Lord, saith the Psalmist, *Psal. 74. 16, 17. the Day is thine, and the Night also is thine: Thou hast prepar'd the Light and the Sun: Thou hast made Summer and Winter. Psal. 104. 30. Thou renewest the Face of the Earth, every Spring: Praise ye the Lord!* How manifest is the Kindness and Wisdom of God herein! That we might not be prejudic'd by too sudden a Passage from the Extremity of Summer's Heat, to the violent Cold in the depth of Winter, nor on the contrary: And that the Earth, which hath been dry'd, and spent by the Heat and Fruit of the Summer, may be moisten'd, and cleans'd, and prepar'd by the Winter for a new Fruitfulness another Year. And after the Widowhood and desolate Condition of the Earth in Winter, the Spring calls up the Sap and Juice of Trees into new Leaves and Fruit; and makes the Plants lift up their Heads, to provide new Supplys of Nourishment for Man and Beast. So wise and good is GOD to all his Creatures.

Is not this an undeniable Argument of a most Wise, and Kind, and Almighty Being, by whom all things are thus establish'd? To preserve the Succession of Day and Night, Winter and Summer, by whirling about every Day and Year this massy Globe of Earth, or (which is more strange) the Sun and other Planets, with so unconceivably swift a Motion, as must long ago have increas'd to an infinite excess, so as to shatter the whole Frame
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in pieces, if not govern'd by the Infinite Wisdom, and Power of God. So convincing is the Discovery of glorious Wisdom, as well as Power in the disposing of these things, and in the regular succession of them; and so exact a Knowledge of Times and Seasons, Days and Years, is thereby had, that the simplest Idiot in a Country can tell you, when the Sun is withdrawn from his Eyes, at what time it will return, and by what degrees his Days and Nights shall either increase or diminish; and what proportion of Time he shall have for his Labour in this Season of the Year, and what in that; without the least suspicion or fear, that it should fall out otherwise.

All this is by his Order and Constitution, who worketh all things after the Counsel of his own Will: Tho the Degree of Heat or Cold, and the Quantity of Rain, which every Country, and every part of it shall have in one Year, and particularly the measure of Snow, and the Extremity or Duration of Frost, are directed with great Variety, according to his pleasure. Which brings me to consider;

4. That GOD is to be prais'd, and own'd, in the *Absolute Subjection of all these things to his Sovereign Will*. He sendeth out his Word, he giveth forth his Orders, and the *Frost and Snow* either come or go at his Call; and where he sends them, they fulfil his Word. Psalm 47. 6, 7. *He is King over all the Earth, sing Praises unto GOD our King, sing Praises. His way is in the Whirlwind, and the Clouds are the Dust of his Feet.* As to us, the Wind bloweth where it listeth; we hear the Sound, and feel the Force of it, not knowing whence it comes, or whither it goes; but not a Puff or Breath of it can stir without his Direction. This is true of the Rain, and of all other particulars. Jer. 14. 22. *Can any among the Vanities of the Gentiles cause Rain?*

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Or can the Heavens (of themselves) give Showers? Are not thou He, O Lord our God? Can any of the Monarchs, and Mighty Men of the Earth call for Rain in a time of Drought? Or can they turn the Bottles of Heaven another way, when there is too much? Psalm 105. 25. *He withholdeth the Waters, and they are dry'd up; he sendeth them forth, and they overflow the Earth. Canst thou lift up thy Voice to the Clouds, (saith God to Job, chap. 38. 34, 35, 37, 38.) that abundance of Waters may cover thee? Canst thou send Lightnings, that they shall go, and say unto thee, Here we are? Who can number the Clouds in Wisdom? Or who can stay the Bottles of Heaven; when the Dust groweth into Hardness, and the Clods cleave fast together?* To command the Winds, and to rule the Waters, and limit the Waves of the Sea, is one of those Glorys of God, wherein Men have not attempted to rival him. *Canutus* the first of the *Danish* Kings of *England*, being at *Southampton*, (to convince and reprove his Flatterers, who cry'd up his Dominion and Power, as if he were Lord of Sea and Land) commanded that his Chair of State should be set on the Shore, when the Sea began to flow; and sitting down there in the Presence of his many Attendants, he commanded the Waters not to touch his Feet, or wet his Robes: but the Sea keeping its usual course of Tide, and not obeying him, he took that occasion to rebuke the foolish Flattery of his Followers, and manifest the Weakness of Kings, in comparison of GOD, whom Heaven and Earth, and Air and Sea obey.

Such Dominion and Power is the Divine Prerogative: He can call for the Waters of the Sea, or stop them, and make a Path through the Ocean. He can command the Vapours in the Bowels of the Earth, or cause his Wind to enter there, and thereby shake the Foundations of a City or Country,

try, and swallow up the Inhabitants at once with their Habitations. He can raise a Wind, that shall make the Sea to break its Banks, and cause terrible Inundations of Water, whereby Towns and Citys have been turn'd into Ponds, intire Provinces ruin'd, and whole Islands overwhelm'd and swallow'd up, so as never more to appear. But the Waves can't pass one Foot or Inch, beyond the limits of those Sands, wherewith he hath bounded the Sea. Tho it be upon a plain level, the Water shall spread no farther, which without the Efficacy of a Divine Order it would certainly do; and the Waves be no more stopt by the Sand on the Shore, than an enrag'd Army would retire upon the Opposition of a Straw in the hand of an Infant. It is bridled by his Power from spreading it self over the whole Earth. Some understand that Passage of the Psalmist, *Psal. 104. 4. He maketh his Angels Spirits, his Ministers a flaming Fire*, agreeable to the *Hebrew Text*; He maketh the *Winds* his Angels, and the Flame or Flames of Fire, i. e. the *fiery Meteors of the Air*, Thunder and Lightning, &c. to be his *Ministers*. He useth them as well as the Holy Angels, to execute his Will; and they as certainly and readily obey his Commands.

'Tis by the ordinary fix'd Laws of the Creation, which GOD hath settled, (and we call the Course of Nature) that the Sea is contain'd within its bounds, that the Sun keeps his Sphere, and the Stars their Order, and the Winter succeeds the Summer; and the like Causes produce the like Effects every Year in their proper Seasons; God *requiring that which is past*, *Eccles. 3. 15.* or calling back that which was driven away. There is a settled Rule in all these Changes, from which second Causes do not ordinarily vary; but GOD may whenever he pleaseth, lengthen out the Heat of Summer, and

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intend it, or sharpen the Frost in Winter, and prolong it, in one Country, and one Year, more than in another.

5. These Works of God do praise him by *the excellent Uses and Purposes*, for which they are employ'd. They know not the Order they observe, or the Subordination and Regularity they keep, or the Ends they accomplish, or any of the Errands on which they are sent; but there is the Counsel of Heaven in forming, and using all of them. He maketh Vapours to ascend from the Ends of the Earth; and all the Meteors of the Air to execute his Will. He proportions the airy and watry Parts together; He forms the Clouds, and then breaks one of those Heavenly Bottles, to send down a refreshing Shower on such or such a part of the Earth. His *Winds* carry about the Clouds to remote Places, in Summer and Winter. These he holds in his hand, and lets 'em out in Weight and Measure, to accomplish his Sovereign Pleasure; and when one Command is done, *The Wind returns by its Circuit*, to execute another, *Eccl. 1. 6.*

The *Epicureans* of old urg'd against the Belief of a Divine Providence, as unconceivable, and therefore incredible, That the Gods should be sufficient for such differing and distracting Employments, as, according to the Exigencys of Nature's Works, to make the Sun shine in one place, the Rain shower down in another, the Winds to blow in a third, the Lightning to flash in a fourth, the Thunderbolts to fall in a fifth, and other Bodys to act and suffer according to their several Natures. All these we believe on good Grounds, are really perform'd by GOD, with a Wisdom that reaches to the utmost Extent of the Universe.

All these Works proclaim the Wisdom, the Power, the Faithfulness, the Mercy, and sometimes the Justice of GOD, in the great Purposes they

they serve. He causeth them to come, *whether for Correction, or for his Land, or for Mercy*, Job 37. 13. *i. e.* either for the Punishment and Correction of a particular People or Person; or for his Land (that which is not inhabited by Man, but by inferior Creatures only, or rather) for the whole Earth which is the Lord's; and so must be understood of more general Judgments, such as Noah's Deluge as yet fresh in memory when Job liv'd: Or for Mercy, and so especially they are us'd in every part of the World, and in every Age. He can glorify himself, and fulfil his Word, by using any of these Creatures, not only for different, but contrary Services; sometimes to preserve, sometimes to destroy, sometimes to fulfil a Promise and at another time to execute a Threatning. So have Fire and Water, Clouds and Rain, Stormy Wind and Tempest, Frost and Snow, &c. been employ'd for Correction or Mercy, for Good or Hurt, to encourage, preserve, and reward good Men; to terrify, restrain, humble, and punish the Wicked.

We read, Job 38. 22, 23. of *Treasures of Hail and Treasures of Snow, which God hath reserv'd against the Time of Trouble, against the Day of Battel, to punish a wicked People.* We have several Instances in the *History of England*, of the great * *Mischief* which hath been done by extraordinary Snows, and a long continu'd Frost.

* Our *Chronicles* tell us, That in Edward the Confessor's Time there fell such abundance of Snow in January, which continu'd in the middle of March; that almost all Cattle and Fowl perished, and there was an excessive Dearth follow'd. And that in Henry IV. his Reign, in his Ninth Year, the Frost and Snow continu'd in December, January, February and March: So that almost all small Birds died of Hunger. In the Reign of King Edward I. the Frost in England lasted seven Months, from the middle of Sep-

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And in such Winters, how many poor Families are reduc'd to the utmost Extremity, and very many, doubtless, starv'd to Death with Hunger and Cold? How easily can God impoverish or destroy a City, Country, or Kingdom, by Frost and Snow? Or punish a People by Storms, Hail, Rain, Thunder, Lightning? 'Tis of these that some understand that Passage in the Song of *Deborah and Barak*, *that the Stars in their Courses fought against Sisera*, Judg. 5. 23. and the rather because 'tis added, *that the River Kishon swept them away*. He can make the Heavens over us to be as Brass, and the Earth Iron: He can deny the former and latter Rain in their Season, or send too much: and by these and many other such Methods, turn a fruitful Land into a barren Defart, for the Iniquitys of them who dwell therein. He can humble Merchants and Seamen by Stormy Winds and Tempests, sinking their Ships and Cargo, when return'd, after a prosperous Voyage, in sight of their Port. He can deprive *Zebulon* (the Mariner's Tribe) of the Harvest of the River, by blocking them up in their Havens by a long Frost. *He breaks the Ships of Tarshish with an East Wind*; and can scatter and destroy the most formidable Armado, which was thought Invincible. Such things we have seen, and our Fathers have told us of the like in their Days, and in the elder Times before them. *Praise ye the Lord.*

But by these Works of God, he doth usually

tember, to the Month of April. And in Henry VIII's Time, in the 15th Year of his Reign, after great Rains and Winds, there follow'd so sore a Frost, that Multitudes of People lost their Fingers, or Toes, or Nails, &c. In the 6th Year of King James I. Ann. Dom. 1609. a Frost began in December which lasted till April, that not only loaden Carts were driven over the Thames, but many Fowl and Fish perish'd, and much of the Herbage in Gardens. You remember the Great Frost, 1683. when Coaches plied upon the Thames, and thousands of Shops and Sheds were rais'd upon the Ice.

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dispense his Mercy, and express Kindness to the Children of Men. In some Countrys, as in *Lapland*, not only doth the Snow abide all the Year on the Mountains, but during the whole Winter the Earth is cover'd with Snow. And considering that for some Months of Winter, the Sun riseth not above their *Horizon*, or not much above it, this is rather an Advantage than an Inconvenience. For by the Light of the Snow they are enabl'd to work by Day, and to travel safely by Night *.

Neither may we over-look the Usefulness of the dissolved Snow on the Mountains, and other parts of the World, where the Ground is not manur'd by the Husbandman; not only that Birds and Beasts may receive some Benefit, but from thence is suppos'd the Rise and Original of many Springs and Rivers, which water the Valleys, and are many ways serviceable to Mankind †.

He whose Mercy is over all his Works, waters the great Garden of the Earth, from the Bottles of the Clouds by Snow or Rain; and futes the Measure and Duration of both to the Necessity of the World, for the Maintenance of Man and Beast.

By the Wisdom of God, in those parts of the World, which the Antients thought to be parch'd up and uninhabitable, there are fruitful and populous Kingdoms; by certain Winds that blow regu-

* In *Lapland* they can discern Pits, and Precipices, and wild Beasts, by the Light of the Moon and Stars, reflected from the Snow; and can travel with such Swiftneß and Convenience, that two Rein Deer in Winter will draw a greater Load over the trodden Snow than a Cart and ten Horses can do in the Fields at other times. *Shefferius Hist. of Lapland*, chap. 3.

† This is the Account given of the Alpine Springs, and the four greatest Rivers in Europe that proceed from them, viz. the Rhine, the Rhosne, the Danube, and the Po. See Mr. Ray, of the Consequences of the Deluge, 8vo.

larly for a great part of the hottest Seasons of the Year; and by copious and lasting Rains that fall at set times; by the greatness of the Rivers which fall not at such certain times to overflow their Banks; and by Winds that in many places blow in the Night, from the Land Seaward, and in the Morning from the Sea towards Land; by these, and some other such things the Ground is moistned and refreshed, and the Air temper'd. And even in our own Climate he fans the Air with his Wind, and cleanseth it by Rain and Thunder, that it may not be infectious. He sends nipping Frosts, and bids the Snow to lie upon the Earth, for the Good of the Corn, and the greater Fruitfulness of the next Summer. These are as necessary and beautiful in their season, as the warm pleasant Beams of the Sun in another part of the Year: For a constant uninterrupted course of warm Weather and Sunshine, would make the Earth fruitful only in Caterpillars and Vermin; would quickly produce a Pestilence and contagious Diseases, and be more proper to fill Graves than Barns. But the wise God directs and orders all these his Works. Therefore *Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem! Praise thy God, O Sion! But,*

II. How may the Consideration of these Wonderful Works of God be improv'd, and what Acknowledgments ought we to pay to the great Lord and Governor of the World, and what Instruction of our Duty be collected from them?

First, All Men should most humbly adore him, and fear before him, and entertain most high and honorable Thoughts of the Blessed God. We are oblig'd, from the View of these his Works, to acknowledge his Almighty Power, own his Sovereignty, reverence his unsearchable Wisdom, and sanctify his great and glorious Name. *He is God alone,*

dispense his Mercy, and expresse Kindness to the Children of Men. In some Countrys, as in *Lapland*, not only doth the Snow abide all the Year on the Mountains, but during the whole Winter the Earth is cover'd with Snow. And considering that for some Months of Winter, the Sun riseth not above their *Horizon*, or not much above it, this is rather an Advantage than an Inconvenience. For by the Light of the Snow they are enabl'd to work by Day, and to travel safely by Night *.

Neither may we over-look the Usefulness of the dissolved Snow on the Mountains, and other parts of the World, where the Ground is not manur'd by the Husbandman; not only that Birds and Beasts may receive some Benefit, but from thence is suppos'd the Rise and Original of many Springs and Rivers, which water the Valleys, and are many ways serviceable to Mankind †.

He whose Mercy is over all his Works, waters the great Garden of the Earth, from the Bottles of the Clouds by Snow or Rain; and futes the Measure and Duration of both to the Necessity of the World, for the Maintenance of Man and Beast.

By the Wisdom of God, in those parts of the World, which the Antients thought to be parch'd up and uninhabitable, there are fruitful and populous Kingdoms; by certain Winds that blow regu-

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lone, and there is none beside him : The whole Earth is full of his Glory. Tho there may be further Excellencies of God, not express'd in this visible World, or in any parts of it known to us. But in these are most unquestionable Discoverys of Infinite Power, and Adorable Wisdom.

Shall I need from hence to expose the Folly of those, who granting the Existence of God, deny his Providence, or confine it to the Heavens and the Celestial Bodys, allowing him no Concern at all for any thing here below, no regard to what happens on this side the Clouds, when he hath made himself visible to every Eye, in all these his Works not only his Being in the Existence of all Creatures but his Wisdom in their Frame, his Power in their Motion, and his Goodness in the useful Regulation and Disposal of them?

So great is the Number, so various the Kinds, so beautiful the Parts, so regular the Subordination and Subserviency of one thing to another, and so admirably wise and good are the Ends and Uses for which they all serve, that we ought most humbly to adore him as Creator and Lord of all.

The wonderful Order observ'd in these things in all parts of the Universe, the Harmony and Concord of so many different Creatures for the Good of the whole, and the Continuance of them for so many Ages, with such constant Changes, such just and well-order'd Revolutions, with a thousand other Particulars, are our continual Wonder, and which we can never admire enough. And to consider them, and not acknowledg a Providence, is a less Extravagance, than to observe a State well govern'd, a Family well order'd, or an Army under good Conduct and Discipline, and yet deny a Magistracy to rule the State, or any body to look after the Family, or any General to command the Army.

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Let not the Commonness of these things take off our Wonder. Let not the Constancy of seeing such Works of God every Year, stifle or abate our humble Admiration of God, which is due on such a sight *. The Things themselves deserve it, and our Relation to God, and our near Concern in these his Works, will oblige us to it. Let us view them, not merely to satisfy a rational Curiosity, but to serve the Ends of Religion; to increase our Knowledge of God, and Veneration for him, and be instructed in our Duty. 'Tis to this End they are expos'd to our View; we are often admonish'd to regard them to this purpose; and 'tis to blemish the Divine Wisdom, not to consider 'em with this Design. *When I consider these things, saith Job, I am afraid of him.* 'Can I stand before this God if he be angry, when I cannot stand before his Heat or his Cold? How easily can he crush and destroy me in a moment? How absolutely within his reach and power is my Life and Breath, and all that I possess? As is his Power, so is his Wrath; most glorious power, and therefore most terrible Wrath! This made the Distress and Consternation of Job, when he apprehended the Divine Displeasure, saying, *God maketh my Heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me,* Chap. 33. 24. As if he could no more bear up under the Sense of his mighty Anger, than the Wax can forbear melting before the Fire. Accordingly in another place he expostulates with God, *Wilt thou break a Leaf driven to and fro? Wilt thou pursue the dry Stubble?* Chap. 13. 25. A little Leaf can as soon stand before a tempestuous Wind, or dry Stubble stop the Rage of a consuming Fire, as any Man be able to resist

* No more than the constant Course of Day and Night, and the Dominion and Influence of the Sun and Moon on the Earth. For which see Dr. Grew's *Cosmologia Sacra*, B. 3. c. 1. p. 88.

the Force of the Divine Power. If he be angry, he can make his Stars dart malignant Influences upon us: By his Lightning, like a glittering Arrow, he can pierce our Hearts: Showers of Vengeance may fall down upon our Heads from the Clouds: He can destroy us by Fire or Water, by Heat or Cold. His Earth may open and swallow us up: His Wind may be employ'd to plague us and blow away such sinful Dust and Ashes. The meanest Creature with his Commission, is strong enough to do it. Let us humbly adore and fear him; remembering that our Forgetfulness of God and Contempt of him, is aggravated by what we see of God in every Season of the Year. *For these things, saith Elihu, he is greatly to be fear'd: Whom he is Dominion, and Fear, and terrible Majesty.*

'Tis observable, that after an Account of God stretching out the *North-Pole* over the empty space of the Air, and hanging this massy Earth upon nothing (for the Earth is suspended in the Air, without any solid Basis to support it from falling) after he had spoken of God's binding up the Waters in thick Clouds, and notwithstanding their Heaviness, the Clouds not rent by 'em; and of his compassing the Waters with Bounds, and measuring place for the Sea; and of his awakening and rebuking the Winds, &c. *All these, saith Job, but part of his Ways, Job 26. 14.* This is a little Landskip but of some few of his wonderful Works. These are little Crums and Fragments of the Effects of his Power; not so much as a small Whisper or a loud Clap of Thunder: For it follows, *The Thunder of his Power who can understand? i. e. What we have said and thought all that we can utter or conceive of the Glory of God in these things, there is a further Excellency and Glory, beyond our reach: There are Depths of Power, and Wisdom, and Kindness in these Works of God, which*

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we do not fathom. The more we know of him, the more Reason shall we have to admire him, and to have reverent Thoughts of him. The more we discover of him, the more we discern him to be Superior to all his Works, and particularly to our selves, who are not of the highest Order of them; but have the Honour and Advantage of a Capacity, and Permission to know, admire, and adore G O D. The Contemplation of his Works will assist us to do so, and help to humble us under the sense of our imperfect Knowledg; whereby the most diligent and modest Enquirers into these things have hereupon profess their Ignorance, and they who have been more confident, have betray'd theirs.

'Tis certain that they, who by the Assistance of good Glafs, have view'd any of these common Works of God, do acknowledg an unexpressible beauty, beyond what is discernable by the naked eye. And here they have often with great Pleasure observ'd such an infinite Variety of curiously figur'd Snow, that it would be as impossible to draw the Figure and Shape of every one of them, as to imitate exactly the curious and Geometrical Mechanism of Nature in any one*.

But if we had the most piercing Eye, comprehensive Mind, and acute Judgment, to improve the consideration of these wonderful Works of God, we have not liv'd long enough to make due Enquiries, and sufficiently to consider 'em. How soon are we puzzled to solve the Difficultys that arise from the most ordinary things? How easily may we be made sensible of our Ignorance, if we let

* Mr. Hooke's Micrograph. Observ. XIV. Sect. 2. And R. Grew, of the Nature of Snow. Philosophical Transactions, May 25. 1673. Numb. 92. And Cosmologia Sacra, B. I. c. 3. Sect. 32, 33.

our Thoughts loose to mount up into the Air, to walk over the Surface of the Earth, or wade through the Sea, or intently apply our Minds to any one Work of God in either of these? There is not a Morsel of Ice, or a Flake of Snow, or a Drop of Rain, or a Breath of Wind, but is the Work of GOD and hath Wonders in it beyond our reach †.

By an Enumeration of such Instances GOD humbled Job, convinc'd him of his Sovereignty and brought him to an adoring Submission. Behold *I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay my Hand upon my Mouth. Once have I spoken, but I will not answer; yea twice, but I will proceed no further.* So the Depths in the Works of Nature should be considered to this end, to teach us to adore him, of whom *are all things, and to whom are all things*; to acquiesce in his Government of the World; to submit to every Revelation he makes of himself by his Word or by his Providence. For why should we suppose there are no Depths and Mysteries in these, when there are so many in the Works of Nature? Why should we pretend to comprehend and fathom every thing, in what GOD speaks by his Word when we find our selves nonplust about his most common and ordinary Works? His Wisdom is

† What shall we think of the Magnitude, Situation, and Motion of the Sun, and other heavenly Bodys? The fix'd Stars, which appear to our Eyes like shining Spangles, are by Artists affirm'd to exceed each of them, above an hundred times the whole Globe of the Earth. And the Sun, which is granted to be some Millions of Miles nearer us than the other fix'd Stars, tho it seems, at a lesser Distance, not to be half a Foot broad, is by the generally receiv'd Mathematicians, believ'd to be above an hundred and thirty times bigger than the Earth; and according to the later Calculation of some accurate modern Artists, 'tis estimated to be eight hundred thousand times as big as the Terraqueous Globe; and by further Observations may perhaps be found to be yet much vaster. See the Honourable Mr. Boyle, Of the high Veneration Man's Intellect owes to God. 8vo.

dorable in these things, and much more in his Providential Government of Men and Angels, and of all their Actions, even of the most voluntary and most crafty Actions of evil Men, and evil Spirits: But much more glorious is that, and other Divine Attributes in the *Redemption of Mankind*, and the Oeconomy of Man's Salvation by Jesus Christ. As to which, we may well cry out with the Apostle, *Oh the Depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out?*

2. All Men are hence to be minded of their Obligation to obey and serve him. Every Creature else you see is directed by his Will, and answers to his Command; and shall we gainsay the Orders of our Maker, which are duly observ'd by the whole Creation besides? Shall we so far forget our selves, as to expostulate with him about what he enjoins, or scruple his Right of Authority to command us? Shall we so far forget the Example of our Fellow-Creatures, as not readily to comply with his Pleasure, and yield dutiful Homage to his most wise and holy Will? Shall Snow and Rain, Clouds and Meteors fulfil his Word, and shall we contradict and refuse what he requires of us? Shall Thunder and Lightning, and Hoary Frost, answer presently to his Call, and say, *Here we are*; and shall we boggle, and hesitate, and demur, whether we will do what he would have us, and go where he sends us, and be pleas'd with what he appoints?

Any little disturbance in the common Course of Nature doth sensibly affect us. If the ordinary Laws of the Creation be transgress'd or vary'd from, in the least Instance, we are startled and amaz'd presently: while we do not resent, or lay to heart the Irregularity of our own Lives and Actions, which are a greater Blemish to the Beauty of the Universe. 'Twas by our Apostacy from

God, and Disobedience to him, that the Earth was curs'd ; and to this day the Strength and Beauty of the Creation languisheth, and groans under that Vanity, to which it is subjected for the Sin of Man. Let the Contemplation of all the Works of God teach us ready Obedience to his Sovereign Will. We have no Pattern or Partners of our Disobedience to it, in the whole Creation, on this side *Hell*. We must fetch the Instance from the Bottomless Pit, if we have any ; for God is readily obey'd by all his other Creatures, except the Devil and his Angels.

3. From what is seen of God in these things, we are encourag'd to seek to him by Prayer, on all Occasions. Moderate or unseasonable Weather, a fruitful or a barren Year, are at his Pleasure and Disposal. *He withholdeth Rain, when there are yet three Months unto Harvest*, and consequently it is more needed. He causeth *the Labour of the Olive to fall* (or lie) so as to disappoint the Hopes of the Husbandman, by not performing what it promis'd. He can either bind up the Influences of Heaven, or make the Meteors of the Air to serve the Earth. Therefore *seek him, who maketh the seven Stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of Death into the Morning : Who maketh the Day dark with Night* (ordering the one to succeed the other) *Who calleth for the Waters of the Sea, and pours them out upon the Earth*. *Jehovah is his Name*, Amos 4. 7, 8. The seven Stars (or *Pleiades*) are mention'd with *Orion*, being the two famous Constellations, the one in the West, the other in the East ; the one in the Spring, the other in the beginning of Winter ; one attended with Rain, the other with Storms and hard Weather : These are ascrib'd to GOD as their Maker. And these are mention'd with two other Constellations, relating to the other two Quarters of the Year, viz. *Mazaroeth* and *Arcturus*.

38. 31, 32. *Canst thou bind the sweet Influences of the Pleiades,* when they open the Earth, and cause the Herbs, and Flowers, and Fruits to come forth, so as to keep back the Spring? Or on the other hand, *Canst thou loose the Bands of Orion,* when the Earth is bound up by a cold and frosty Season, and stormy Winds, so as to keep off Winter? *Canst thou bring forth Mazaroth in his Season,* or *canst thou guide Arcturus with his Sons?* Is it by thy Power that the rest of the Stars, great and small, appear in the Southern and the Northern Signes, in their proper Seasons? All the kind Influences of any of these is owing to God; unto him we must pray, and unto him return Thanks. It is his Work: He is not necessitated to bestow them, but doth it freely: And we have forfeited these common Blessings, and may justly be deny'd their Continuance. He expects to be acknowledg'd and sought to, with reference to these things; and hath often own'd and rewarded Prayer from others, besides the Prophet *Elijah*, who when the Famine was fore in *Samarina*, by Prayer obtain'd *Rain*, 1 Kings 18. 41.

The Influence of a serious Reflection on these Works of God, will reach further with respect to Prayer: It will oblige us to acknowledg God's Hand in healthful and seasonable Weather, to beg it of God from time to time, and to deprecate the long Continuance of violent Heat or Cold, as what would prove a Judgment: And therefore in a frosty Season we may well and lawfully pray, that God would please, in his due time, to make the Waters gently to flow again.

4. We are hence encourag'd to trust in GOD. He who hath all Creatures in the Air, and Earth, and Sea at his Command; who, by his universal Presence, actuates all their Powers, and wisely directs all their Motions, and hath given proof of his steady Faithfulness, by continuing to do so every

ry year, in all Ages and Generations to this day; he is worthy of our Dependance and Trust, and may justly challenge it. He can do great things that we cannot comprehend, marvellous things without number. Who can disannul his Purpose, or turn his Hand when he stretcheth it out? What can be a Difficulty to him, who made and maintaineth all things? Can we fall so low, that he cannot raise us? Or be reduc'd to such straits, wherein he cannot help? If we are distrest at Sea or Land, is not He Lord of both, and present every where? Can we stand in need of a stronger Arm, or deeper Wisdom, than is discover'd in the Works of Nature, and daily Providence?

The *Jews* are call'd upon in this Psalm to trust GOD, and own him in his Providential Dispensations, because the numbring of the Stars, and the Government of the Heavenly Bodys is ascrib'd to him, as well as the disposal of Frost and Snow, &c. *He telleth the number of the Stars, he calleth them all by their Names*, ver. 4. The Stars of Heaven, they observe their Courses, and many ways influence the Earth; and notwithstanding the vast Magnitude and great Variety of them, and of their several Motions, they continue still to do so, because of his Ordinance and Appointment. These Stars (which are so impossible to be numbred by us, that they are join'd with the Sand upon the Sea-shore for multitude) they are not only numbred, but particularly known by him: All their Powers, Qualitys and Influences are created by his Word (or an Expression of his Will) and are perfectly at his Command: the whole Host of them are so, as Soldiers at the direction of their General.

Can we believe this, and think the great Affairs of Mankind are excluded his Inspection and Care? Can we imagine he is an idle Spectator of the Revolutions of Kingdoms, and all the Changes that

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happen to publick Societys? The Advancement of Princes to a Throne, or their Removal? which way soever it be brought about, either by themselves, or their Subjects, by a Civil, a Natural, or a Violent Death. Are not the Hearts and Lives of the greatest Personages in his Hand? who can turn them as the Rivers of Water, as easily as he can dissolve the Snow or Ice.

We need fear no Enemies or Dangers, if he be with us and for us; for all Creatures obey him. If he arise for our Help, all Enemies are scatter'd as Chaff before the Wind, and as a rolling thing before the Whirlwind. How powerfully can he save? How suddenly can he destroy? None of the Grandees of the World can stand before his Cold or Heat, or the least Creature arm'd with his Commission. The most inconsiderable of them are sometimes imploy'd in mighty Works of Mercy or Judgment. Princes, and Popes, and Emperors have been devour'd, and vast Armys discomfited, by such little Creatures as Lice, and Mice, and Locusts, and a Troop of Flys. While we can hope for his Presence, in the discharge of our Duty, we may be confident that there is no threatening Danger he cannot prevent; no mischievous Design against us but he can defeat: And this sometimes by surprizing Arts and Methods of Providence, so as to hide those whom he intends to preserve. I have read of one, who was pursu'd by bloody Persecutors to the House where he took shelter, who crept into a Hole, over which a Spider quickly weav'd a Cobweb; and so when he was sought for, the Place of his Concealment was not suspected. The Hope of the Hypocrite and Ungodly is compar'd to a Spider's Web, so weak a thing, so easily broken, and swept away; but the Divine Wisdom can make a little Cobweb as good a Defence and Preservative as the strongest Fortress, or a Munition of Rocks.

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The good Effect of the Winter's Frost and Snow is perceiv'd very often the following Summer, and should encourage us to trust in God, for a good Issue of the darkest and most severe Dispensations of Providence, which for the present have another Appearance. As when a Gardener is seen to pull up some delightful Flowers by the Roots, to dig up the Earth, and cover it with Dung, some ignorant Persons may be ready to charge him with spoiling the Garden; but when the Spring is arriv'd, there will be sufficient ground to acknowledg his Wisdom in what he did.

And some Assistance it may give us to believe, that the regular Hope and Trust of good Men shall not be disappointed by GOD, because he doth every Year so punctually satisfy the Expectation of the Heathen, yea, of the Beasts of the Field, and the Fowls of the Air, in the Succession of Day and Night, Summer and Winter. It may encourage us to look for Light after a time of Darkness, and a joyful Morning after a Night of Sorrow. There is an observable Vicissitude of Good and Evil, in the Affairs and Conditions of Mankind, and of the Church. It was so in the State of the Jewish Church (and the like is true of other Kingdoms) with respect to their several Kings and Princes. Things were bad enough in the time of *Saul*; of *David* and *Solomon* they were better: *Rehoboam* and *Abijah* bad; *Asa* and *Jehosaphat* good: *Foram* and *Joash* bad; *Uzziah* and *Jotham* good: *Ahaz* bad; *Hezekiah* good: *Manasseh* and *Ammon* bad again; *Josiah* good, and his Successors till the Captivity all bad: After the Captivity good, a little reviving. This is to be observ'd also in more private Instances, and is suited to our middle State in this World, between the perfect Joys of Heaven, and the unmix'd Sorrows of Hell: And this is proper to prevent our Despondency

in a time of Affliction, as if we should never be deliver'd; and to check our Pride and Confidence in Prosperity, as if our Mountain should never be mov'd. By this means we may be brought to own the Hand of God in all our Comforts and Crosses, and to live a Life of Faith and Dependance on him, *Whose is the Day, and also the Night, and who maketh Winter and Summer.*

5. Let the Inhabitants of *Sion and Jerusalem*, the People in a visible Relation to God, more especially praise him. All the Works of God do praise him objectively, tho they know not themselves, and are incapable of Active, Intelligent Adoration and Praise: Therefore *his Saints do bless him.* How pleasing was the Meditation of these Works of God to the Psalmist, who thereupon breaks out into Joy and Praise! *Psalm 104. 24, and 34. The Earth is full of his Riches, all wait upon him; He opens his Hand, and fills 'em with Good: He hides his Face, and they are troubled; if he take away their Breath, they die: He sends forth his Spirit, and they are created; and he renews the Face of the Earth. The Glory of the Lord shall endure for ever, the Lord shall rejoice in his Works.* Shall Snow and Hail, and Frost and Ice show forth the Praise of GOD, and shall not we extol him? The Psalmist summons the most insensible Creatures, *Heavens and Earth, Sea and Land, Snow and Vapours, Clouds and Hail, and all his Host, to praise the Name of the Lord.* He commanded, and they were created: He made them, and he rules them: They bear some Impression of their Maker: They punctually observe his Orders, and do his Will. We will therefore *praise the Lord,* for his Power, Wisdom, Goodness, Faithfulness, and Sovereignty in all his Works.

We are greatly concern'd to do so, considering that whatever Good or Kindness we receive by any of these wonderful Works of GOD, they are directed

directed by his Providence, dispos'd to us by his Wife and Bountiful Hand, and are dispens'd and given to us out of his Exchequer. If we want any of these Blessings, which according to the Course of Nature, and the Season of the Year, we may expect, how importunately do we cry? And when we receive 'em duly, without Interruption, shall GOD be overlook'd? Shall Distress and Trouble put us upon Prayer? And shall not Love and Gratitude to God awaken our Praises, when we receive 'em? We commonly and truly say, that *Atheists are not thankful*, because they acknowledge not a GOD, from whom all their Mercys come. And is it not Practical Atheism, to neglect the Sacrifice of Praise, (which he will own and accept as a *Sacrifice*) when every Year we largely partake of his Bounty in these things? Shall we give the Glory to *Second Causes*, which is due to the First and Supreme? Ought we not to say, That 'tis of the Lord's Mercy, our common Blessings are not blasted, and turn'd to a Curse? Ought we not to praise him with the Voice of Thanksgiving, that *in this Winter Season* we have Houses to shelter us, and Clothes and Fire to warm us, and Food to refresh us; and are preserv'd in going out, and returning Home, and our Bones not broken (as is the Case of many) by a sudden Slip or Fall? And praise him we ought to do, by assisting and relieving the Poor, that they also may rejoice, and give Thanks to God.

The Duty is ingeminated, *Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem! Praise thy God, O Sion!* It imports the most earnest Desire of the Psalmist, that God should have his due; and withal the wretched Backwardness of our Hearts to the Work of Praise, and that it ought to be continu'd and repeated. But in this and all other Cases of Thanksgiving, we must remember *the Order* to be observ'd in Praise

A Sermon of Frost and Snow, &c. 31

Praise as well as Prayer, *i. e.* to prefer Spiritual Blessings in Heavenly Things in Christ, before Temporal. We bless God for our Food and Raiment, for our Basket and Store, for Protection and Provision, for the former and latter Rain, for the Showers of Heaven, and fruitful Seasons, for Frost and Snow, and Winds and Clouds, &c. but above all for our *Lord Jesus Christ*, and his Holy Gospel, and the Means and Hopes of everlasting Mercy. As to the former, happy are the People that are in such a Case; but unspeakably more blessed are they, *whose God is the Lord.*

Lastly, Let us endeavour to make it manifest upon good Grounds, that this God is our God in Covenant. Till by Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and unfeign'd Devotion to him, we are interested in his Covenant-Favour, and can say, *This GOD is our GOD*; there is no Attribute or Work of GOD, no Discovery or Manifestation of himself in Nature or Providence, but is matter of Terror to us. What a perplexing confounding Thought must it be, to apprehend this *GOD*, who made and manages all things, to be my *Enemy*? or not to know, that he is my *Friend*? How comfortable is it, on the other hand, to be able to consider, that the great Lord and Ruler of all this World is *my reconcil'd GOD, and Father*? That he who hath all Creatures at his Dispose is my best Friend? What a Privilege is it to be adopted into his Family? to be under his peculiar Care and Charge? to have an assur'd Expectation from him of all needful Supply, for Life and Godliness? With what Patience and Peace may we possess our Souls, in the most dark and difficult Times? Tho the Earth should be never so unquiet, the Foundations of it mov'd, and the Pillars thereof shaken, we may rejoice in the Lord, and wait for his Salvation. *For Sion's GOD reigns;*
in

in whose hand are all the Works of Nature, all the Motions of Providence, all the Events of Time, and all our Concerns for ETERNITY.

And if *now* he be so wonderful in these ordinary Works; and every Winter, and every Summer we have so much reason to adore and praise him; How much greater *Wonders of glorious Wisdom, Power and Love*, hath he prepar'd, and reserv'd in the upper, better World, for his Friends and Children? If there be so much matter of Admiration now, by what is visible in the inferior Creatures of this Earth; with what ravishing Splendor will the Brightness of his Glory appear hereafter? when the Veil shall be remov'd, and our Capacity enlarg'd, and our Souls admitted to *behold him Face to Face, and know as we are known*. Therefore, for all we now see and know of GOD, or hope to do hereafter, (as the God of *Nature, Grace, and Glory*) *Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem! Praise thy God, O Sion!*

F I N I S.



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